BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

The Census

- **In 1996, there were 478,185 British Columbians who had completed university, accounting for 16.2% of the province's adult (aged 15 and over) population.** This was about double the percentage in 1981, when 8.2% of BC residents had completed university.

  BC had one of the most highly-educated populations in the country. Nationally, 15.6% of adults had a university degree, certificate, or diploma. Ontario (16.8%) and Yukon (16.6%) were the only regions with a higher percentage of the population having completed university. Newfoundland (9.9%) had the lowest percentage of university graduates. *Source: 1996 Census of Canada*

- **About a third (33.8%) of adult British Columbians did not have a high school diploma in 1996.** This compares to just under half (44.7%) in 1981. During this period, the percentage of British Columbians with a high school diploma doubled, increasing from 11.9% to 23.2%. The number of people with trades certificates or diplomas rose from 3.1% of the adult population in 1981 to 12.0% in 1996. Other parts of the country have seen similar growth in trades. On the other hand, relatively fewer (14.8%, compared to 21.8% in 1981) British Columbians had other non-university education.
  Source: 1996 Census of Canada

- **Residents of Atlantic Canada, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and NWT were more likely than other Canadians to be without a high school diploma in 1996.** In these regions, the percentage of the adult population which had not completed high school ranged from 41.0% in Nova Scotia to 47.7% in NWT. The national average was 36.8%. Yukon (31.5%) and BC (33.8%) had the lowest percentages of non-graduates in the country.
  Source: 1996 Census of Canada

- **Recent immigrants were more likely than other Canadians to have attained a higher level of education.** In 1996, 20.7% of Canadians between the ages of 25 and 44 were university graduates. Among recent immigrants, the percentage was much higher (33.7%). University graduates accounted for only 19.3% of the Canadian-born population in this age group. More than half (55.1%) of recent immigrants to Canada from the US were university graduates. A high percentage of immigrants from the Philippines (48.0%), Taiwan (45.1%), China (43.7%) and India (41.2%) were also university graduates. *Source: 1996 Census of Canada*

The Economy

- **Exports of British Columbia products dropped sharply in February, declining to 14.3% below the February 1997 level.** This was the second straight month in which exports have fallen at double-digit rates. Apart from a moderate increase (+0.3%) in November, BC's exports have been declining steadily since last July. Forest product exports, which plunged 21.4%, contributed most to the drop. Exports of industrial goods (-18.8%) were down significantly from last year, and energy (-2.9%) exports were also lower than in 1997. However, exports of automotive products (+32.7%) and consumer goods (+16.9%) continued to improve.

  In the rest of Canada, Alberta posted its fourth straight decline in exports, as weak prices reduced the value of energy exports. Exports were up in all other provinces except New Brunswick (-6.4%). Nationally, Canadian exports rose 6.4%

Report **Migration Trends**

Did you know...?
Americans are the world's fifth biggest consumers of Coca-Cola, drinking an average of 370 ten-ounce servings per person in a year. The leading consumers are in St Maarten (580 servings), the US Virgin Islands (420), Iceland (400) and Aruba (390).

after increasing only marginally (0.3%) in January. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Tourism

- **Visitor entries into BC from other countries were 10.5% higher in February than in the same month last year.** Entries by Americans increased at double-digit rates for the fourth straight month, growing 15.3% in February. Same-day trips from the US were up 15.2%, and the number of Americans making overnight trips to the province increased at a similar rate (15.4%). Nationally, the number of overnight visits from the US in February exceeded Canadian overnight trips to the States for the first time in 10 years. In BC, there were still more Canadians returning from overnight trips to the States than Americans returning from similar trips to Canada. However, the gap has narrowed significantly. A year ago, the ratio was one-and-a-half to one.
  Source: Statistics Canada

- **Entries from countries other than the US were down 11.3% in February, due to a 25.1% drop in the number of visitors from Asia.** Entries from Asia, which had surged ahead during the mid-1990s, started to slow last summer, as widespread weakness in Asian economies put a damper on overseas travel plans. On the bright side, entries to BC from Europe showed signs of recovery, increasing 15.1% in February after rising 16.7% in the previous month. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Life Expectancy at Birth

- **British Columbians born during 1996 could expect to live an average 78.9 years: 76.1 years if they were male and 81.8 years if they were female.** BC residents had the highest life expectancy in the country, edging out Ontario, where the average life expectancy was only marginally lower (78.8 years). The national average was 78.6 years. Life expectancies varied only moderately among the provinces, ranging from a low of 77.2 years in PEI to 78.9 in BC. However, residents of NWT (72.7) and Yukon (75.2) had considerably lower life expectancies than other Canadians.
  Source: Statistics Canada

Fires

- **More British Columbians were injured in fires, but fewer lost their lives as a result of fire in 1996 than in the previous year.** There were 27 fatalities–18 men and 9 women–and 432 injuries resulting from fire in 1996. This compares to 36 people who lost their lives, and 414 who were injured as a result of fire in the previous year. Thirteen of the fatalities during 1996 were people over 60 years of age, and seven died in fires that were caused by careless smoking. One person died as a result of an intentionally set fire.

  In total, 7,487 fires resulting in property losses of $164.1 million, were reported to the Fire Commissioner. The average loss per fire was $21,919, up from $19,996 in 1995.
  Source: Fire Losses in BC, Ministry of Municipal Affairs

- **Twenty-four percent (1,763) of all fires in 1996 were in one- and two-family dwellings, and another 7% were in apartment buildings.** One in four fires in private dwellings were cooking fires. In single-family homes and duplexes, heating equipment was the next most common cause (17%); but in apartments, smoking (19%) and arson (19%) were more prevalent. About 13% of fires in single and two-family dwellings were the result of arson.
  Source: Fire Losses in BC, Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The Hamburger Standard

- **Big Mac lovers in Switzerland pay an average $3.87 US for a hamburger, more than in any other country.** Consumers fork out an average $3.39 for Big Macs in Denmark, $3.38 in Israel, and $3.05 in Britain. They are cheapest in Indonesia ($1.16), Malaysia ($1.16) and China ($1.20). In US funds, Canadians pay less ($1.97) for a hamburger than our neighbours to the south ($2.56). *Source: The Economist magazine*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Infoline Report:

April 17, 1998

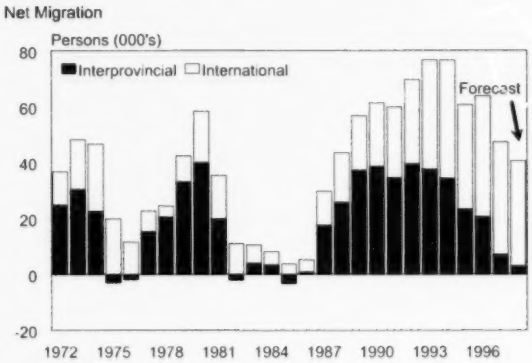
BC Migration
- Outlook for 1998

Originally published in Fourth Quarter 1997 issue of *Migration Highlights*. An annual subscription is $30 + GST

Summary

During 1998, the population of British Columbia is expected to increase by 40,500 persons due to migration from other provinces and other countries. This is down from 47,300 registered last year, and is a continuation of a downward trend since 1994. A decline in interprovincial migration of 4,100 people is the major factor in the lower 1998 forecast level.

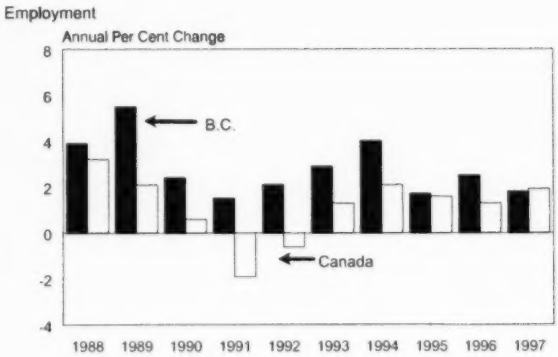
Slower net migration to BC is expected in 1998.



BC STATS

Some observers attributed the relatively good economic performance of British Columbia in the early 1990's to the strong population growth resulting from high levels of migration from the rest of Canada and the rest of the world. Net inflows of population to BC strengthened consumer spending and residential investment. This increase in economic activity, in turn, created jobs and income within the province. From 1989 to 1994, BC had the highest rate of job creation of any province in Canada, but in two of the last three years (1995 and 1997) BC's employment growth was similar to the national average. In 1997 employment growth was 1.8 per cent, slightly below the average for Canada. The relatively strong employment growth over the past few years has produced only a small drop in the unemployment rate (one percentage point from 1993 to 1997), because the labour force (those employed and unemployed) has expanded equally quickly.

In 1997 job creation in BC was similar to the country as a whole.



BC STATS

Given the impact of population growth on labour markets and overall economic performance, it is important to examine what is in store for migration to British Columbia in 1998. Net migration to BC has been quite volatile over time. The record high net inflow during 1993 of 76,500 persons is in sharp contrast to the low of 500 experienced during 1985. This volatility is one of the reasons why it is difficult to accurately predict migration. Most researchers would agree that the first step to forecasting migration is to isolate the factors that influence migration, then attempt to predict those factors. The task of isolating these factors is simplified by separating migration into the international and interprovincial components.

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International Migration

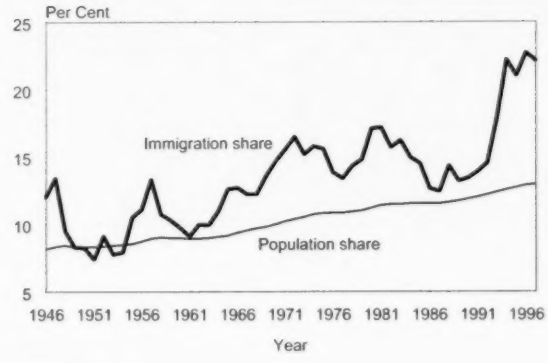
Net international migration to British Columbia is driven largely by federal government policy with respect to immigration. The federal government sets an overall annual immigration planning level for Canada. These planning levels are not intended to be rigid quotas and actual immigration may exceed or fall short of the planning level. In October 1997 the planning level was established for 1998 at 200,000 - 225,000 persons, up slightly from the previous year.

The planned immigration intake since 1984 is given in the preceding table along with the actual immigration. As can be seen from the table, the actual immigration intake for 1994 was well below the planning level and subsequent planning levels have been lower. The steady increase in immigration to Canada experienced since the mid 1980's has levelled off over the last few years, and immigration to Canada in 1998 is expected to be in the same range as in the last four years.

Canadian Immigration

Year	Planning Level (000's)	Actual (000's)	BC Share (%)
1984	90-95	88	14.9
1985	85-90	84	14.5
1986	105-115	99	12.7
1987	115-125	152	12.4
1988	125-135	162	14.3
1989	150-160	192	13.2
1990	200	214	13.4
1991	220	225	13.9
1992	250	253	14.3
1993	250	255	17.9
1994	250	224	22.0
1995	190-215	212	21.0
1996	195-220	224	22.6
1997	195-220	216	22.1
1998	200-225		

BC's share of immigrants to Canada has been above 20% for the last four years.



BC STATS

Starting in 1994, British Columbia has experienced a significant increase in its share of immigrants coming to Canada. In 1997, immigration to BC was down slightly from the 1996 record high intake in terms of both numbers and share. The 1993, 1994 dramatic increase in share cannot be attributed to any one country, but rather appeared to be a general increase from all world areas. In effect, it would appear that since 1993, BC has become a more attractive immigrant destination relative to central Canada.

This increase in the proportion of immigrants choosing BC as a destination since 1993 may have been due to the perception of a higher level of economic activity in BC relative to central Canada. The reverse situation occurred during the early 1980's when BC's share of Canadian immigrants dropped to the 12 per cent range due to the relatively favourable economic conditions that existed in Ontario at that time. It appears that BC's higher share of immigration in the past four years is also partly a result of lower immigration to Quebec. Quebec, which is the only province to have responsibility for the selection of some classes of immigrants, has dropped its share of immigration from 17 per cent in 1993 to around 13 per cent over the last four years. Since Quebec is only planning

a small increase in its immigration intake in 1998, it is likely that BC's share of Canadian immigration in 1998 will remain relatively high at around 21 per cent.

As a result, the 1998 forecast of net international migration to British Columbia is 37,500 persons.

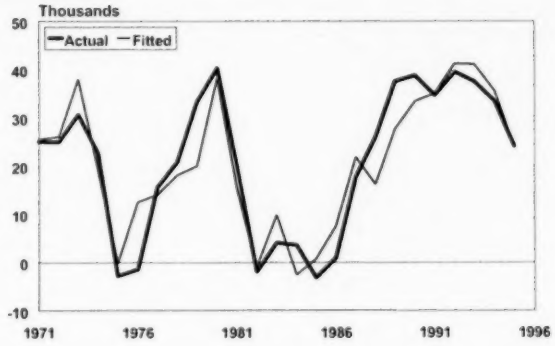
Interprovincial Migration

Unlike international migration, interprovincial migration is not governed directly by government policy, but rather is influenced by a wide variety of economic, demographic, social and political factors. Many view interprovincial migration as a combination of "push" factors that pressure a migrant to seek better opportunities, and "pull" factors that attract a migrant to a particular location. Consequently, movement between provinces under this Push-Pull hypothesis results from differences in economic and non-economic conditions in respective regions.

As noted above, the factors that draw Canadians to British Columbia are both economic and non-economic in nature. Non-economic factors such as climate or lifestyle are slow to change. Hence, it is the economic factors, or more specifically, the relative economic conditions between British Columbia and the other provinces, in particular Alberta and Ontario, that must be considered when predicting changes to BC net interprovincial migration.

Statistical analysis indicates that over the past thirty years, fluctuations in British Columbia net interprovincial migration have been correlated to a significant degree with relative differences in the British Columbia/Alberta and British Columbia/Ontario unemployment rates, as well as with differences in the growth of the British Columbia economy relative to the rest of Canada, as measured by real Gross Domestic Product[1]. The following chart shows that, these variables, when combined in a regression equation, can predict with reasonable accuracy the actual net interprovincial migration for BC.

Model of net interprovincial migration



Many other economic factors likely play a role in influencing population movement (e.g. housing prices); however, in many instances empirical data on these factors are not available for a sufficient historical period to conduct statistical analysis. In addition, in order to forecast migration, consideration must be given to the practicality of forecasting the theorised determinants of migration. Both these constraints put limits on the number and type of variables considered as drivers of interprovincial migration. Consequently, the factors noted above do not uniquely describe inter-provincial migration flows, but rather are the ones that fit the criterion of statistically significant correlation with past migration flows, and have the potential to be forecast themselves.

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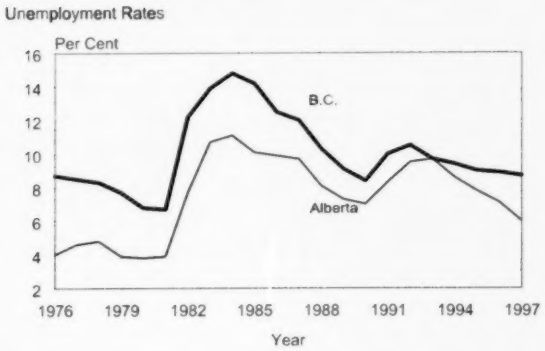
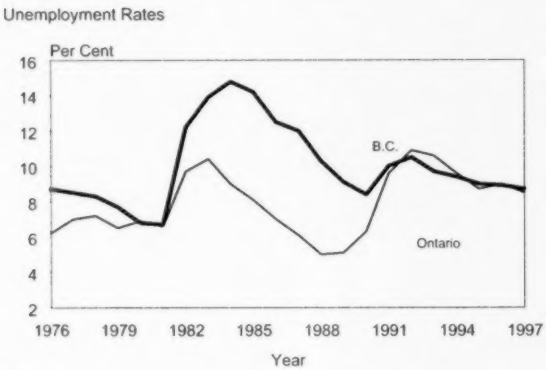
1 See "*An Econometric Model Describing the Movement of the Population Between British Columbia and the Rest of Canada*", McRae and Schrier, Population Section, *BC STATS*, Province of British Columbia, October 1996.

In the last four years unemployment rates in BC have been higher than in Alberta.....



BC STATS

but similar to those in Ontario.



BC STATS

The recent levels of interprovincial in-migration from Alberta, Ontario and the rest of Canada are largely a reflection of the relative unemployment rates. Over the last twenty years with the exception of 1993, BC has always had a higher unemployment rate than Alberta (2.6 percentage points on average), but for most of that period, BC has received population from Alberta, the exceptions being the mid seventies and early eighties, when the differential reached the 4 to 5 percentage point mark, and last year. During 1997, the difference between Alberta and BC increased to 2.6 percentage points. As a result, the migration flow reversed, becoming a net outflow of 7,600 from BC to Alberta. This was the largest net outflow to Alberta in 20 years.

Similar to Alberta, over the last twenty years, BC has generally had a higher unemployment rate than Ontario (2.1 percentage points on average), but for most of that period, BC has also received population from Ontario, with the exception of the mid eighties when the unemployment rate spread reached 6 percentage points. For most of 1992, 1993 and 1994, this differential reversed with BC recording a lower unemployment rate (0.9 percentage points in 1993), which contributed to the unusually high net inflow of population to BC from Ontario in 1992 and 1993. In the last four years the unemployment rates in BC and Ontario have been quite similar with BC's rate being slightly lower in 1994 and 1996 and Ontario's rate slightly lower in 1995 and 1997. However, in the second half of 1997 the spread between the two provinces widened as the Ontario rate fell, while the BC rate continued at high levels. Net migration from Ontario to BC dropped to 7,100, its lowest level since 1988. Looking ahead to 1998, it is unlikely that there will be any significant increase in migration from Ontario.

In the last three years overall economic growth in BC, as measured by real GDP at factor cost, has been much weaker than for the country as a whole. In 1997 the Canadian economy grew by 3.9 per cent, while economic indicators suggest that growth in this province was much less. Forecasts of the BC economy indicate that BC's growth is likely to remain well below the national growth rate in 1998 and as a result migration to BC from other parts of the country is expected to be very low.

Given the above considerations, net interprovincial migration to British Columbia during 1998 is expected to decrease to 3,000 persons from the 1997 level of 7,100 persons.

Risks to the Forecast

The main risk to the 1998 migration forecast is the interprovincial component. In-migration from other provinces, in particular Alberta, fell more than expected in 1997. It is possible that economic conditions could improve in Ontario relative to BC more quickly than anticipated, reducing the net inflow of population even further than predicted.

Another uncertainty is the effect that the Asian financial crisis might have on immigration to Canada and in particular to BC. Since 1994 Asian countries have been the source of 60–65 per cent of the immigrants entering Canada and 80 per cent of those coming to BC. The economic situation in Asia could potentially have an impact on the timing of immigration to BC.

Recent Feature Articles

Sep	1994	Migration and Population Aging
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Apr	1995	BC Migration - Outlook for 1995
Jun	1995	Seasonal Patterns of Migration
Sep	1995	Regional Interprovincial Migration
Dec	1995	What is Happening to Interprovincial Migration?
Apr	1996	BC Migration - Outlook for 1996
Jun	1996	Migration and Housing Demand
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Infoline

April 17, 1998

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/98	% change on one year ago
BC	3,950.7	1.7
Canada	30,425.3	1.0
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		% change on
(BC - at market prices - $ millions)	1996	one year ago
Current Dollars	103,631	1.7
Constant (1986) Dollars	74,001	1.0
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Jan	2,740	-7.3
Merchandise Exports (raw) Feb	1,905	-14.3
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Jan	2,791	-0.7
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	Feb '98	one year ago
BC	109.5	-0.1
Canada	108.3	1.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Mar '98	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,044	2.7
Employed - BC	1,841	1.0
Unemployed - BC	203	20.4
		Mar '97
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	9.9	8.5
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.5	9.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Apr 15/98	Apr 16/97
Prime Business Rate	6.50	4.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.30	5.55
- 5 year	6.75	7.65
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Apr 15/98	Apr 16/97
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.4393	1.3975
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.6948	0.7156
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jan '98	one year ago
BC	612.78	0.4
Canada	604.17	1.6

SOURCES:
Gross Domestic Product: Statistics Canada, revised by BC STATS
Population, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

Revised on our site . . .

When we added *Quarterly Regional Statistics* to the subscriber section of our Web site we said this would allow us to provide updated tables in advance of the next paper release. We have now updated the following tables:

6	Building Permits by Type
10	Basic BC Benefits Recipients
11	Employment Insurance Beneficiaries
12	BC Benefits & Employment Insurance Beneficiaries

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Released this week by BC STATS

- Labour Force Statistics, March 1998

Next week

- Major Projects Inventory, March 1998
- Immigration Highlights, for the Year 1997
- Tourism Room Revenue, December 1997
- Exports, January 1998

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